V.—GOVERNMENT BILLS.

(1) THE MADRAS PUBLIC LIBRARIES (AMENDMENT) BILL, 1954 (L.A. BILL NO. 29 OF 1954).

* THE HON. SRI C. SUBRAMANIAM :—" Mr. Chairman, Sir, I beg to move—

' *That the Madras Public Libraries (Amendment)* ***Bill*** [a] *1954 (L.A. Bill No. 29 of 1954), as passed by the Assembly be taken into consideration.*'

This is a very simple Bill rectifying a small defect in the provisions of the old Act. According to the provisions of the present Act as they stand, any gift to any library can be accepted only after the Government gave sanction for that purpose. It is not necessary that for everything it should go to the Government for sanction. Therefore, in respect of books which are ordinary gifts given to a library, we have provided in this amending Bill that the Director can give sanction to them. This is a simple Bill and I hope the House will agree to it."

MR. CHAIRMAN :—" Motion moved—

' That the Madras Public Libraries (Amendment) Bill, 1954 (L.A. Bill No. 29 of 1954), as passed by the Assembly be taken into consideration."

SRI K. BALASUBRAMANYA AYYAR :—" Mr. Chairman, Sir, as the Hon. Mover of the Bill has stated, this is a simple Bill. I do not want to say anything elaborately about it. But I want to say one or two words. Sir, at the time of the discussion on the Supplementary Demands, I made certain observations that the Madras Public Libraries Act, 1948, has not properly worked in our State and though the Government have been collecting the library cess for libraries, it has not yet been utilized to the extent to which it ought to have been utilized in our country, and the Hon. the Minister for Education was then pleased to state that he would go into the whole matter and see, if possible, what could be done. Therefore, I am mentioning it again.

" I also made a reference at that time that there should be a Director of Public Libraries appointed specially for this purpose because the Director of Public Instruction is already an over-worked officer and he has got a lot of work to attend to and these things cannot be attended to by him. Sir, the Madras Public Libraries Act, 1948, provides for the appointment of a Director of Public Libraries and, therefore, I feel that if they had brought in an amendment appointing a Director of Libraries and empowering him to accept these gifts, it would have pleased me much better than the present amending Bill which is now before the House."

11-20 a.m. * SRI E. H. PARAMESWARAN :—" Mr. Chairman, Sir, I wish to associate myself generally with what the Hon. the Minister for Finance and Education said and, at the same time, I am inclined to agree with my hon. Friend, Sri K. Balasubramanya

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[a] Printed as Appendix III on page 515 infra.

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Ayyar, that there is a feeling among the public that the Public Libraries Act of 1948 has not done very much to meet the situation with regard to libraries. May I point out, Sir, that when this Act was passed there were very great hopes entertained that there would be a radical transformation of the situation regarding libraries in our State. But, in spite of the fact that so many years have elapsed after the passing of this Act, we do not find any great change. With regard to the City of Madras, we find it in the newspapers again and again that five or six lakhs of rupees have been locked up in the District Libraries Association and there is no District Library for the City of Madras. With regard to the mufassal also there is some such feeling. Therefore, while we may congratulate ourselves that we have already taken some step forward, we ought not to remain content with it. We ought to see that libraries are established in all the rural areas. It is important that these library books should go to all the villages and mobile vans should be utilized to carry them to the villages. As the hon. Member Sri K. Balasubramanya Ayyar said, I feel that one of the fundamental defects in the Madras Public Libraries Act of 1948 now is that no separate Director of Public Libraries has been appointed. As long as the Director of Public Instruction is entrusted with the work relating to public libraries, we cannot expect things to progress. As far as I know the Director of Public Instruction is entrusted with very heavy responsibilities and he has absolutely no time at attend to this work. I may also say, Sir. that I am the representative of the Madras Legislative Council on the Public Libraries Committee. During the last twenty months there has been no meeting of the Committee and I have been asking the Office of the Director of Public Instruction as to when there will be a meeting. It is said that it will take some more time.

"With these observations, I would request the Hon. the Minister for Education to see if a separate Director of Public Libraries cannot be appointed. I do not see what is the difficulty in doing so. We need not have a very big officer on a salary of Rs. 1,000 or Rs. 1,500. We can have a responsible officer on a small salary to look to the working of the Public Libraries Act and the organization of public libraries in all the districts. I am sure, the Hon. the Minister for Education will look into the matter and see that great progress is made with regard to the organization of libraries not only in the large towns but also in the rural areas. With these remarks, Sir, I have pleasure in supporting the motion."

* SRI T. PURUSHOTHAM :—" Mr. Chairman, Sir, before I offer a few remarks on this Bill, may I congratulate the Hon. Sri K. Kamaraj Nadar, on his election as a Member of the Legislative Assembly. (Hear, hear.) He has set a great example in democratic conventions in seeking the popular vote soon after his election as Leader of the Congress Legislature Party and I thought that I must take this opportunity of congratulating . . "

SRI K. BALASUBRAMANYA AYYAR :—" The hon. Member can congratulate the Hon. the Chief Minister on behalf of the Council."

* SRI T. PURUSHOTHAM :—" Yes, Sir. I certainly congratulate him on behalf of the Council.

" As regards this amending Bill, it will be noted that for purposes of administration of the Madras Public Libraries Act of 1948 there is a statutory body like the Local Library Authority for each district and I do not see any reason why the previous sanction of the Government or the Director of Public Instruction is required for accepting gifts. Some of the panchayats have offered to transfer the existing panchayat libraries to the library authority. Sir, my difficulty is this. Why should not this Statutory Library Authority which includes officials like the District Educational Officer have the power to accept gifts and why the previous sanction of any other authority is required?

" Sir, I would like to submit in this connexion that the Madras Public Libraries Act, 1948, and the rules thereunder require radical changes. At present the rules require the sanction of the Director of Public Instruction for the purchase of even small items like library furniture, etc. The rules should be liberalized and the Government should, I believe, place more confidence in non-official bodies like the Local Library Authorities. The present Act requires as I said salutary changes and I would request the Hon. the Minister for Education to take up this question.

" A separate Library department, I believe, should be constituted for making the library service more efficient. The District Educational Officer, as the Secretary of the Local Library Authority, is not able to devote full-time attention to problems connected with rural library service. Perhaps, a Deputy Inspector of Schools may be appointed as full-time Secretary for each of the Local Library Authorities. I would also suggest that adult education work in rural areas should be entrusted to this agency. Having expressed my views on the Bill, I have no objection to this small Bill going through."

* SRI K. BHASHYAM :—" Mr. Chairman, Sir, I think hon. Members of this House have been good enough to support the Bill but, at the same time, have made a lot of criticism against the working of the Public Libraries Act of 1948 and the working of the department. This shows that they are not satisfied with things as they are and that they would like something to be pulled up somewhere so that the Public Libraries Act may be efficiently administered. I would therefore like to ask that if the Government do not act up to the suggestions and take steps to remedy the defects, how could they expect gifts to be made or persons to come forward with endowments? The Government must attend to these criticisms and see that the Act is satisfactorily worked so that the people may be induced to make the necessary endowments and the necessary gifts of books to the libraries,

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" Having said this, I want to add a few words in reply to the hon. Member Sri T. Purushotham who suggested that there should not be any necessity to obtain sanction of the Government or of the Director of Public Instruction for the acceptance of gifts. In the case of libraries, I would like to point out that there are certain books which may not be good from a general point of view, or from the point of view of moral standards or they may be even objectionable from a political point of view. Then there may also be endowments with conditions and terms which may not be quite acceptable to the Government. In both cases, it is necessary that some gentleman must have the right to investigate the matter and sanction the acceptance of such gifts. Therefore, it is but right that the Government or the Director of Public Instruction must have this power. I would like to add once again that the criticisms made on the floor of this House seem to show that there are many things which have to be done before the Government could expect people to take any endowments or gifts."

* SRI G. KRISHNAMOORTHY :—" Mr. Chairman, Sir, I am glad that this Bill seeks to empower the Director of Public Instruction to just permit authorities of Public Libraries to accept books. There are books and books and as the previous speaker the hon. Member Sri K. Bhashyam, said, there are books which cannot be accepted for the use of public libraries. Even books which are approved by the Text-Book Committee which is acting under the auspices of the Government are not an exception to this. The wrapper is all right, the picture on the wrapper is all right and patently the book seems to be a national one but there are many places wherein we can find anti-national sentiments. It is really a sad picture that, when from Kashmir to Cape Comorin from the Prime Minister of India down to the lowest patriotic-minded man we have been impressing upon the people that there should not be any anti-national sentiment and no occasion to spread it, especially through print which is considered to be *Veda* by many people, anti-national sentiments do find a place in our books. There are books which are anti-national in character. There are books prescribed by the Education Department to-day in which there is a great tendency to create in the impressionable minds of the pupils a difference between the North and the South. There are books which proclaim from house-tops that one man is superior to another or that one man is inferior to another while we have been hearing at the same time, the voice of our revered Prime Minister that there should not be any such thing. If at all 11-30 a.m. anything is to be achieved through public libraries which are supposed to contain the sacred books of our ancients and which books are supposed to teach the young to be loyal to the National Government, it is our duty to see that the Director of Public Instruction is enjoined by the rules to be framed under this Act by the Government that not only he accords sanction of Local Library authorities to accept gifts of books but also sees to the fact that from the first to the last line each book does not contain any anti-national sentiment whatsoever."

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* DR. V. K. JOHN :—" Mr. Chairman, Sir, the Madras Public Libraries Act, 1948, was passed on the 8th February 1949 and it was sought to provide for the establishment of libraries in the State of Madras and the organization of a comprehensive rural and urban library service. Now I take it that it is the opinion of this House and it is the opinion of the educated public in the State that the object of this Act has never been implemented. It provides for Local Library authorities. I should like to know from the Hon. Minister how many local library authorities have been established and to what extent the objects of this Act have been implemented. I join along with the other speakers in saying that it is high time that the Government look into this matter and amend the Act, if necessary, and see that the objects of the Act are implemented."

SRI V. CHAKKARAI CHETTY :—" Mr. Chairman, Sir, I should like to say one or two words about this Bill to amend the Madras Public Libraries Act, 1948. I am a frequent visitor to the Connemara Public Library. It is a poor institution from the standpoint of the availability of new books. Many new books recently written are not available at all. It is an apology for a library. I should very much like the Government providing books on important scientific and literary subjects. This library contains, unfortunately, only old manuscripts and old books. Even these books are practically in a state of collapse. The moment I take a book the pages of it break into pieces like "pappadams '. Sometimes it is even worse than that.

" Secondly I should like to ask the question ' why sanction is necessary for accepting gifts of books? ' Do the Government want that a sort of censor should be appointed for censoring literary publications? We have all been against the appointment of censors to scrutinize the news appearing in newspapers and in literary publications. The readers of the publications would certainly be in a position to discriminate between what is right and what is wrong. Why should we ask any authority to go into this question? I do not like the idea of constituting anybody as censor to scrutinize the acquisition of books in Public Libraries. If the publications are obscene in character, of course, they can be objected to and the Police have got powers under the general law to prosecute the authors of these books and also seize the books. Apart from this, I do not believe any one would be entitled to go into the question whether the sentiments expressed in a publication are national or anti-national. I do not know how it is possible for any one to determine which is national and which is anti-national. If a certain officer is criticised in a book, do the Government mean to say that it is anti-national simply because an officer has been criticised? I do not believe that anybody should be authorized to receive or reject books that are offered by any public-spirited person for being put on the shelves of a public library."

* SRI T. M. DAIVASIKHAMANY ACHARIAR :—" On a point of information, Sir. The hon. Member Sri T. Purushotham has stolen a march over other hon. Members of this House in

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having congratulated the Hon. Chief Minister on the brilliant success he has recently achieved. Sir, in the fitness of things, taking into consideration that this House is a school of extraordinary discipline and is entitled to set an example to the other House, each individual Member should be allowed an opportunity to express his views if he wants to do so. That is my point, Sir, which I am urging before you for taking necessary steps and allowing all others also to speak about it."

MR. CHAIRMAN :—" This is not usually done and we have gone away from the right path when the Hon. the Chief Minister on his success in his election and hon. Members Sri C. Rajagopalachari and Dr. A. Lakshmanaswami Mudaliyar on the titles conferred on them were felicitated. We do not usually do this but to-day the whole House is behind the felicitation and that satisfies it."

* THE HON. SRI C. SUBRAMANIAM :—" Mr. Chairman, Sir, I am grateful to the various hon. Members who have made very useful suggestions in regard to the working of the Public Libraries Act. As a matter of fact, I confessed the other day that it had not been working properly. When I looked into the working of this Act, I found that in many places, apart from the libraries working properly the libraries have not been started. Therefore, the first thing I thought was to set in motion the starting of libraries in places wherever possible. I am glad to say that it is being done in most of the places. Even in the City of Madras I found that for the last five years a Central Library has not been started. Thanks to the efforts of the Local Library Committee of the Madras City, they have very recently opened a Central Library and on the occasion of its opening I was assured that there would be opening of branch libraries very soon. So also in Chingleput district they have opened a Central Library and they have also opened a few branch libraries already under the guidance of the hon. Member Sri T. Purushotham. In other districts also the Local Library authorities have opened a few libraries. I hope to complete the opening of libraries very soon. Then, Sir, the question with regard to the difficulties of working these libraries will be taken up. If I had taken up the question of scrutinizing the working of this Act, I am sure, even the opening of these libraries in the various places would have been delayed. That is the excuse in regard to the complaint that I have not taken up immediately the question of bringing forward a comprehensive amending Bill.

" Coming to the small amendment to the original Public Libraries Act of 1948, suggested in the Bill, certain hon. Members have expressed themselves against the checking of gifts of books made to the various labraries. I respectfully differ from them. Nowadays many books written are not worth the name of books. Such books may also be presented to the various libraries. Therefore it is necessary for the Central Authority to scrutinize the various books which are being given by way of gifts. With regard to the

purchases we have passed an order that only authorized books should be purchased. Persons who are interested in libraries may present to them very many valuable books. Some persons may pass on books which they do not find necessary or for which they have found no use. It should not be left to the authorities to accept any of the books so presented. That is why we have to put a check on the acceptance of gifts of books. I am sure the Director of Public Instruction will exercise his authority with discretion and I do not think there will be any occasion to criticise the existence of that authority at any time. With reference to other gifts, a provision is already there that Government alone
11-40 a.m. should grant the sanction because other gifts should not be passed on to libraries without the sanction of the Government. I therefore request that the Bill may be taken into consideration at once."

Mr. CHAIRMAN :—" The question is—

'That the Madras Public Libraries (Amendment) Bill, 1954 (L.A. Bill No. 29 of 1954), as passed by the Assembly, be taken into consideration.' "

The motion was carried and the Bill was taken into consideration.

Clause 2 was put and carried.

Clause 1 and the Preamble were put and carried.

The Hon. Sri C. SUBRAMANIAM :—" Mr. Chairman, Sir, I move—

'*That the Madras Public Libraries (Amendment) Bill*, 1954 (*L.A. Bill No.* 29 *of* 1954), *as passed by the Assembly, be passed into law.*' "

Mr. CHAIRMAN :—" The question is—

'That the Madras Public Libraries (Amendment) Bill, 1954 (L.A. Bill No. 29 of 1954), as passed by the Assembly, be passed into law.' "

The motion was carried and the Bill was passed into law.

IV. (2)—MOTION UNDER RULE 22 (3) OF THE COUNCIL RULES.

* The Hon. Sri M. BHAKTAVATSALAM :—" Mr. Chairman, Sir, I move—

'*That under Rule* 22 (3) *of the Council Rules, the Madras Hindu Religious and Charitable Endowments (Amendment) Bill*, 1954 (*L.A. Bill No.* 27 *of* 1954), *as passed by the Assembly, with the amendments made by the Council and not agreed to by the Assembly be taken up before the Bhavanisagar Township Bill*, 1954 (*L.A. Bill No.* 28 *of* 1954).' "